

British East Africa. The species was named after Lady Delamere :—

PTILOPACHYS FLORENTIÆ, sp. n.

Closely allied to *P. fuscus*, but distinguished by having the plumage altogether darker, the black markings, especially on the underparts of the body, being much coarser. The mantle and upper back are devoid of the broad chestnut shaft-streaks characteristic of *P. fuscus*; on the sides of the breast, belly, and flanks the wide chestnut middles to the feathers are much reduced, and the sides of the feathers are strongly barred with black and white. Iris brown; bill and legs dull red. Total length about 10 inches, wing 4·7, tail 3·6, tarsus 1·15.

Hab. Gessema, British East Africa.

XLIV.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

[Continued from p. 562.]

103. *Adams on the Birds of Western Rajputana.*

[The Western Rajputana States, a Medico-topographical and General Account of Marwar, Sirohi, and Jaisalmir. By Lieut.-Col. Archibald Adams. London, 1899. 1 vol. 8vo.]

This is a statistical account of the three above-mentioned Rajputana States of Western India, embellished by numerous illustrations and apparently well put together. The list of birds, which is compiled from the writings of Butler, Hume, and Marshall, contains little, if anything, original, except a few introductory remarks. The well-known health-resort of Mount Abu, which comes within the limits of the work, attracts many species which would otherwise leave the country during the breeding-season. Here the Indian Cuckoo calls from May to August, and bird-life is abundant.

104. *Arrigoni degli Oddi on rare Birds in Italy.*

[L'*Aquila rapax* (Temm.) ed il *Buteo desertorum* (Daud.) per la prima volta osservati in Italia. Per Prof. Ettore Arrigoni degli Oddi. 'Avicula,' iii. fasc. 21-22.]

The author records the recent addition of these two

Raptors to the Italian avifauna. A young male *Aquila rapax* was shot in November 1898, at Stagno di Cágliari in Sardinia; and a young female *Buteo desertorum* was obtained in the flesh in the market of Foggia in February 1899, so that there could be no doubt of its having been shot in the neighbourhood. Full descriptions of both the specimens are given.

105. *Barrington on the Migration of Birds at Irish Light-Stations.*

[The Migration of Birds as observed at Irish Lighthouses and Light-ships, including the Original Reports from 1888-97, now published for the first time, and an Analysis of these and the previously published Reports from 1881-87; together with an Appendix giving the measurements of about 1600 Wings. By Richard M. Barrington. Pp. 285 Analysis, pp. 660 Reports. London, R. H. Porter; Dublin, Edward Ponsonby, 1900.]

It is hardly necessary to remind our readers that Reports on the Migration of Birds as observed at Light-stations in the United Kingdom were published by a Committee of the British Association from 1881-87 inclusive, after which they were discontinued, and the preparation of a digest was entrusted to Mr. W. Eagle Clarke, who completed his task in 1896. Reference to 'The Ibis' for 1897, p. 272, will show our high appreciation of the manner in which he performed this onerous work. After 1887 it appears to have been considered that enough had been done, and, at all events, no further schedules were issued from the Association; but Mr. Barrington held different views, and was of the opinion that no digest could yield satisfactory results unless it were based upon a much longer series of years. He has, accordingly, continued, at great personal expense, the issue of schedules to the Light-stations of Ireland for ten years longer, with the result that not merely bald, and often unsatisfying, records have been furnished by the light-keepers, but, in addition, over *two thousand specimens* of birds—or wings and feet of birds—have been forwarded to him, leading to very important identifications. Among these may be mentioned the Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius pomeranus*), unique

for Ireland; four examples of the Red-breasted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa parva*), all obtained in autumn; the Golden Oriole (*Oriolus galbula*) in May; the Black Redstart (*Ruticilla tithys*), which is now shown to be a regular visitant and not a mere straggler, as formerly supposed; the Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*) twice in autumn, the only occurrences for Ireland; the Barred Warbler (*S. nisoria*); the Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus superciliosus*), the Short-toed Lark (*Aldauda brachydactyla*), and the Lapland Bunting (*Calcaarius lapponicus*), all three unique for Ireland; and the Wryneck (*Ijnx torquilla*), four examples out of six on record for Ireland. These, though sufficient in themselves to show the value of the observations, are merely the most remarkable species; but, while they appeal to the chronicler of rarities, the records of the dates and frequency of the occurrences of more vulgar species are of no less importance. On these points attention may be invited to the migrations of the Turdidæ; also to the times at which birds strike the lanterns of the lighthouses, and to an important suggestion respecting one reason why birds of weak flight migrate by night rather than by day—namely, the predacious propensities of the numerous Gulls. Not only are the larger species a terror, but even *Larus canus* has been proved to attack and kill birds up to the size of a Blackbird on the wing, and the smaller *Larus ridibundus* is not innocent in this respect.

It would be easy to extend our notice of this fascinating volume, but several pages would be required to do it anything like justice. The large map and the insets are very useful, and there is a full index. We strongly recommend our readers to lose no time in obtaining a copy for their library, for the issue is very small, and we should not be surprised to find it exhausted within the twelvemonth. As a record it does great credit to Mr. Barrington and those whom he names as having cooperated with him from year to year, not forgetting the light-keepers, whose interest seems to have increased annually. We are sorry to gather from a "Note added in press" that some expressions in the Preface have "been understood as reflecting on the results

obtained by the British Association Committee and Mr. Eagle Clarke," and Mr. Barrington hastens to disclaim any idea of the kind. For ourselves, we had read the Preface before this slip was issued, without the slightest suspicion of an *amari aliquid*, and even now, with our curiosity stimulated, we confess our inability to detect any phrase calculated to cause offence to the most susceptible.

106. *Bianchi on the Genus Tetraogallus.*

[Uebersicht der Arten der Gattung *Tetraogallus* Gray. Von V. Bianchi. Aus dem Russischen übersetzt von Michael Härms. J. f. O. 1899, p. 421.]

Herr Härms has translated from the Russian original Bianchi's revision of the species of *Tetraogallus*, published in December 1898 in the 'Annuaire du Musée Zoologique' of the Imperial Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg. The species of *Tetraogallus* usually recognized are six:—*TT. caucasicus*, *caspius*, *himalayensis*, *altaicus*, *tibetanus*, and *henrici*. To these M. Bianchi proposes to add two new subspecies of *T. himalayensis*, namely, *T. h. grombcewskii* (from the Western Kuen-Lun) and *T. h. kosłowi* (from the Altyn-tagh, Western Nan-schan, and Southern Koko-nor chains). All the eight forms are carefully diagnosed and their ranges are fully described.

107. *Coward and Oldham's 'Birds of Cheshire.'*

[The Birds of Cheshire. By T. A. Coward and Charles Oldham. With six Photogravure Illustrations and a Map of the County. Pp. 278. 8vo. Sherratt and Hughes, 1900.]

Among the meritorious works issued of late years on the birds of counties or areas the present volume takes very high rank; in fact it may be styled a model, for there is no extraneous matter, but a plain record of observations. The announcement that our M.B.O.U., Mr. Frank Nicholson, has read the proofs is in itself a guarantee of the quality of the field-notes, for his acquaintance with the districts surrounding Cheshire, as well as the county itself, must be almost unrivalled. The physical features of the areas into

which the county may be divided, namely the central plain, the hill country of the east, and the Wirral peninsula and marshes of the Dee, are well described; and in spite of the spread of population on the Lancashire side, coupled with the inevitable reclamation of marsh-land, it is clear that plenty of wild country is still left for the ornithologist in Cheshire. In number of species the county is not very rich—only 222; but these are all genuine, and there has been no attempt to swell the list. The fact is that Cheshire lies too far to the west for some migrants, while it is yet a little too far east for the inferior line of passage which passes down the west coast of Great Britain and crosses the Irish Sea by Wigtonshire, Anglesea, and the Isle of Man. The illustrations are pretty, the bibliography forms a good feature, and the index is copious; but the map is hardly up to the standard of the rest of the book.

108. *De Kay's 'Bird-Gods.'*

[Bird-Gods by Charles de Kay. With an Accompaniment of Decorations by George Wharton Edwards. London: Harry R. Allenson. 1 vol. 8vo. 250 pp.]

We have received a copy of this curious book with a request that it may be noticed in 'The Ibis.' It is difficult to pick out the thread of the author's ideas from his remarks, for these wander into all sorts of subjects that are quite unfamiliar to plain ornithologists. Perhaps the subjoined extract from the preface will serve to explain the purport of the volume:—

“I follow in mythology and epic poetry and legends the traces of certain birds, the Eagle, the Swan, the Woodpecker, the Cuckoo, the Owl, the Peacock, the Dove, and try to show how their peculiarities and habits, observed by primitive man with the keenness of savages, have laid the foundation for certain elements in various religions and mythologies, and sometimes furnished, through the peculiarities of the creature's habits or character, the skeleton plots on which a host of legends and tragedies has been built by the imagination of poet-priests and poet-historians of the early days.”

109. *Fatio on the Birds of Switzerland.*

[Faune des Vertébrés de la Suisse. Par Victor Fatio. Vol. II. Oiseaux. Ire Partie, Rapaces, Grimpeurs, Percheurs, Bailleurs et Passereaux. Avec 3 Planches hors texte, dont 2 en couleurs, 1 carte géographique coloriée, 135 figures dans le texte, dont 127 originales, et 26 tableaux. Genève et Bâle: Georg & Co., 1899.]

We welcome the first instalment of a complete and up-to-date work on the avifauna of Switzerland, from the pen of our accomplished Foreign Member. The portion which relates to the diurnal Raptores contains far more details than those given in the treatise published in 1889 in collaboration with Dr. T. Studer (*cf. Ibis*, 1889, p. 394), while all the rest of the work will be absolutely new to our readers. Dr. Fatio very properly places a note of query to such species as the American *Turdus solitarius*, ascribed to Switzerland by the credulous Degland and Gerbe; but the occurrence of *T. fuscatus* in Aarau, as a wanderer, is not improbable; and the irregular appearance of *Sylvia melanocephala* near Geneva might be expected. The figures in the text are adequate; the synoptical lists leave nothing to be desired, and there is an excellent index. We shall be glad to see Part II., with the coloured plates that have been unavoidably omitted from this volume.

110. *Festa on the Breeding of a Curassow in Europe.*

[Allevamento della *Crax panamensis* in Piemonte. Del Enrico Festa. Boll. Mus. Zool. Università di Torino, xv. no. 361.]

Dr. E. Festa, whose splendid collection of the birds of Ecuador has recently been catalogued by Count Salvadori (*cf. Ibis*, *suprà* p. 559), brought home with him in 1898, from Panama, a male and two females of *Crax panamensis*. From eggs of one of these females laid in May 1899 two young birds were artificially hatched and successfully reared. Dr. Festa describes their various changes of plumage.

111. *Finn on some Indian Weaver-birds.*

[Notes on the *Ploceidae*. By F. Finn. J. A. S. B. lxviii. pt. 2, p. 250, 1899.]

Mr. Finn has discovered that his supposed new Indian

Weaver-bird, *Ploceus rutledgii*, is merely *P. megarhynchus* Hume, in summer plumage. He also suspects that *Munia malaca* interbreeds with *M. atricapilla*, and makes a suggestion for a more natural division of the Ploceidæ, from the form of the culmen, into Ploecinæ and Spermestinae. He likewise records his experiments on sexual selection in the Avadavat (*Sporæginthus amandava*).

112. Hall on *Pardalotus assimilis*.

[Notes on the Occurrence in Victoria of a Phase of the Subspecies *Pardalotus assimilis* Ramsay. By Robert Hall. Proc. Linn. Soc. N. S. Wales, 1899, p. 472.]

Mr. Hall describes a form of *Pardalotus* occurring in Victoria, which is considered to be "a phase" of *P. assimilis* Ramsay, and presents some slight differences from that subspecies of *P. affinis* (cf. Cat. B. x. p. 56).

113. Härms on the Birds of Archangel.

[Beiträge zur Kenntnis der ornithologischen Fauna des Archangelsker Gouvernements. Von Michael Härms. Ornithol. Jahrb. xi. p. 81.]

The author passed thirteen days in July 1899 (6th to 18th) at Sijskov, a village on the river Dwina, near the confluence of the Sija, in 63° 37' N. lat., and made a good collection of birds, of which he gives an annotated list. *Phylloscopus borealis* was found breeding, and at that time had unfledged young. One of the most interesting Passerines met with was *Emberiza aureola*, of which 21 examples were obtained. It inhabits the meadows on the banks of the Dwina, and has a short melodious song; its nests and eggs were taken.

114. Hartert on the Study of Subspecies.

[Ueber das Studium der Unterarten. Von Ernst Hartert. J. f. O. 1900, p. 129.]

Mr. Hartert sends us a separate copy of his discourse on subspecies which was read before the Anniversary Meeting of the German Ornithological Society in October 1899. We

will venture to make a few remarks on it, and to say that we agree with the author in the main. There can be no doubt that geographical forms of widely spread species exist, and that they are worthy of careful study. By far the best way of designating them is the trinomial system, only that we should prefer to call the originally described form "typicus" instead of repeating the specific term: for *Merula merula merula* is really unbearable. But the trinomial plan has been discredited amongst many sober and "old-fashioned" ornithologists, owing to the light and easy way in which some of the *novi homines* create subspecies without sufficient material, sometimes even on a single specimen. As Mr. Hartert himself remarks, it requires much more evidence to found a good subspecies than a good species. A single specimen may be quite sufficient basis for the former, while for the latter a large series is necessary. And subspecies are, on account of the slighter differences between them, much more matters of individual opinion than the better-defined species. While, therefore, we admit that subspecies must be used in certain cases, we advocate much greater care in their institution.

115. *Le Souëf's Visit to Western Australia.*

[A Visit to Western Australia. By D. Le Souëf. Victorian Naturalist, xvi. p. 185.]

Mr. Dudley Le Souëf sends us a copy of an address to the Field Naturalists' Club of Victoria, which contains an account of his visit to Western Australia in October 1899, and of what he saw—botanical and zoological. Several pages are devoted to the birds, which, however, are stated not to be numerous except in certain favoured localities. It is an error, Mr. Le Souëf tells us, to suppose that all the Emeus of Western Australia belong to the spotted form named *Dromæus irroratus*. If this be the case, the so-called species is (as we have long suspected) probably not even a local form or subspecies, but merely a casual variety.

116. *Madarász on Anser neglectus in Hungary.*

[*Anser neglectus* Sushk., a Magyar Orniszbad. Von Dr. Julius von Madarász. Termész. Füzetek, xxiii. p. 75.]

Dr. v. Madarász records the occurrence in Hungary of a specimen of the lately described *Anser neglectus* Sushk. (cf. Ibis, 1897, p. 8). It was purchased in the market at Pesth, and is said to have been obtained near Pancsova on Jan. 1st, 1900. It agrees in every particular with the original description of Sushkin. Other examples are believed to have been seen in the same market.

117. *Madarász on the Acredulæ of the Caucasus.*

[Ueber die Kawkasischen *Acredula*-Arten. Von Julius v. Madarász. Termész. Füzetek, xxii. p. 197.]

Dr. v. Madarász has studied a series of Long-tailed Tits from the Caucasus, and has come to the conclusion that five species of *Acredula* occur there. Two of these, which he considers to be new and names respectively *A. dorsalis* and *A. senex*, are figured in a coloured plate. The three other species recognized as Caucasian are *A. tephronota*, *A. caucasica*, and, strange to say, the typical *A. caudata* of the North.

118. *Madarász on Birds from Zeng.*

[Bemerkungen zu Prof. M. Marek's Artikel "Ornithologisches aus Zengg." Von Jul. v. Madarász. Ornithol. Jahrb. xi. p. 71.]

Zeng is in Croatia, on the shores of the Adriatic. Dr. v. Madarász criticizes some identifications made by Prof. Marek in an article on the birds of this district (Termész. Füz. xxii. p. 344) and takes the opportunity of calling attention to his new generic term "*Ptilocorys*," for the Crested Larks (proposed in 'Magyorország Madaras,' p. 48, 1899), in place of "*Galerida*," because he considers the latter untenable.

119. *Martorelli on Spiziapteryx circumcinctus.*

[Nota Ornitologica sullo *Spiziapteryx circumcinctus* (Kaup) del Prof. Giacinto Martorelli. Atti Soc. Ligustica Sci. Nat. e Geogr. vol. x. p. 5, 1900.]

Prof. Martorelli sums up our knowledge of the rare Diurnal Bird of Prey, *Spiziapteryx circumcinctus* (first figured in

'The Ibis' for 1862, pl. ii.) of Argentina, and gives a new description and figure of it from a specimen in the Turati collection at Milan.

120. *Neumann on the Genus Sigmodus.*

[Neue und seltene Arten des Genus "*Sigmodus*," Temm. Von Oscar Neumann. Ornithol. Monatsb. 1899, p. 89.]

Herr Neumann reviews some of the African Bush-Shrikes of the genus *Sigmodus*, and makes two new subspecies of *S. retzii*—namely, *S. r. nigricans* from Northern Angola, and *S. r. intermedius* from Tanganyika and Victoria.

121. *Neumann on the African Bush-Shrikes.*

[Beiträge zu einer Revision der *Laniarinen*. Von Oscar Neumann. J. f. O. 1899, p. 337.]

Herr Neumann reviews the African Bush-Shrikes of the six genera *Malaconotus*, *Cosmophoneus*, *Chlorophoneus*, *Pellicinius*, *Laniarius*, and *Dryoscopus*; *Cosmophoneus* being a new genus instituted for *Laniarius multicolor* and its allies. The following species and subspecies are described as new:—*Malaconotus hæmatothorax* from Cameroon, *M. catharoxanthus* from the White Nile; *Cosmophoneus preussi* from Cameroon, *C. reichenowi* from Cameroon, *C. sulphureopectus suahelicus* from East Africa; *Laniarius ethiopicus hybridus* from Transvaal; *Dryoscopus malzacii nyansæ* from Kavirondo and Uganda, *D. m. erythrææ* from Erythræa, *D. cubla occidentalis* from Angola, and *D. c. suahelicus* from British and German East Africa. The various forms of *Laniarius ethiopicus*, after a special study of their divergences, are reduced to subspecies. In *Dryoscopus* several species are recognized which can be distinguished only in the female sex, the males being nearly identical.

122. *North on Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds.*

[Descriptions of the Nests and Eggs of Six Species of Australian Birds. By Alfred J. North, C.M.Z.S. Victorian Nat. xvi. p. 9.]

Much attention has been lately paid to the nests and eggs

of the birds of every part of Australia, and we are expecting the publication of two works on this subject. Mr. North now describes the nests and eggs of the Drop-marked Bower-bird (*Chlamydodera guttata*) and of five other species of which the eggs were not previously known. It is stated that figures of all these eggs will be given in the second edition of 'The Descriptive Catalogue of the Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds' now in the press.

123. *Oberholser on Birds from the Santa Barbara Islands.*

[Notes on some Birds from Santa Barbara Islands, California. By Harry C. Oberholser. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 229.]

This is a complete list, with various critical notes, of the 26 species of birds obtained in the summer of 1892 by Mr. C. P. Streater, during an expedition to the Santa Barbara Islands, off the coast of California. The new "forms" have been already described, but it would have been better to have added references to the descriptions, which is not always done. Most of the peculiar "forms" are treated as only subspecifically different, but *Aphelocoma insularis* is pronounced to be quite distinct from "both of its mainland relatives." A few general remarks on the avifauna as a whole would have made this paper much more interesting.

124. *Oberholser on Abbott's Collections in Central Asia.*

[Notes on Birds collected by Doctor W. L. Abbott in Central Asia. By Harry C. Oberholser. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 205.]

Mr. Oberholser catalogues the collection of birds made by the energetic American traveller Dr. W. L. Abbott in Kashmir and Ladak in 1895 and 1897 and presented to the U.S. National Museum. It contains 142 specimens, which are referred to 62 species. Mr. Oberholser proposes to separate a larger form of *Totanus calidris*, of which 4 specimens were obtained in Ladak, as *Totanus totanus eurhinus*, but we doubt much whether a subspecies ought to be based on so small a number of individuals. He likewise wishes to alter the name *Saxicola montana* Gould to *S. oreophila*, because Koch

in 1816 applied the name *Saxicola montana* to *Monticola saxatilis*. We see no reason for this change and consider it to be unnecessary. Nor can we agree to adopt Mr. Oberholser's new name "*Perissospiza*" for *Pycnorhamphus*, because "*Picnoramphus*" of Rosenberg (a useless synonym of *Sphecothea*) is not identical. We also object to Mr. Oberholser's version of the specific name of the Blue Rock-Thrush. Linnæus called it "*cyanus*," which word is a substantive and cannot be altered to "*cyana*."

125. Oberholser on Birds from Madagascar.

[Catalogue of a Collection of Birds from Madagascar. By Harry C. Oberholser. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 235.]

A collection of birds made in Madagascar (1894-96), chiefly in the neighbourhood of Imerina, by the Rev. James Willis, has been obtained by the U.S. National Museum. It contains 110 specimens belonging to 57 species, of which a catalogue with critical remarks is now given. Amongst the rarities are examples of *Lophotibis cristata*, *Ardeola xanthoptera*, and *Newtonia amphichroa*. By "*Anhinga rufa*" we presume *Plotus levaillanti* is indicated. To recently changed names such as this it is better to add the usual appellation, in order to assist the "slow coaches" who are not always alive to the newest discoveries of their more enlightened friends.

126. Pycraft's 'Story of Bird-life.'

[The Story of Bird-life. By W. P. Pycraft. London: George Newnes, Ltd., 1900. 1 vol. 12mo. 244 pp. (Price 1s.)]

This is a very nice little book, and should be bought and read by every lover of birds, whether scientific or unscientific. We have seldom seen so much good and-mostly-correct information on our favourite subject compressed into so small a compass, and to be acquired at so cheap a rate. The twelve chapters on the bird's form and structure, its clothing, its food, its flight, its courtship, its home, its nursery, its distribution in time and space, and finally on its pedigree and

descent are all full of interest. We may not perhaps agree in every particular with the author's views, but we have little fault to find with his statements, and his quotations are generally, although not always, well selected. But we are sorry that he should have been misled by the "poet Cowper" (and some recent writers) into believing the ancient myth about the mode of breeding of the Ostrich (*Struthio*). It is now perfectly well established that the Ostrich is monogamous, and that both cock and hen take part in the duties of incubation (see Ibis, 1899, p. 481). The little volume appears to have been very carefully "read," and the misprints are few, although we may remark that our great authority on the Cuckoo is "*Rey*," not "*Reh*" (see p. 163). But, on the whole, we have seldom met with a book so free from defects of this kind, and are pleased to be able to tell Mr. Pycraft that we close it with such a "feeling of satisfaction" as he hoped would follow its perusal. In our opinion it is one of the most instructive manuals on bird-life that has yet appeared.

127. *Richmond on a new Dendroornis.*

[Description of a new Bird of the Genus *Dendroornis*. By Charles W. Richmond. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 317.]

Dendroornis striatigularis is based on a single specimen obtained at Alta Mira, Mexico, in 1894, by Mr. F. B. Armstrong. It is generally similar to *D. flavigaster*. The specimen is in the U.S. National Museum.

128. *Richmond on new Birds from Siam.*

[Descriptions of Three new Birds from Lower Siam. By Charles W. Richmond. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 319.]

The collection made by Dr. W. L. Abbott in the province of Trong, Lower Siam, embraces some 1300 skins, including representatives of many species not yet recorded from that district. Mr. Richmond characterizes the following as new:—*Ethopyga anomala*, *Criniger sordidus*, and *Turdinulus granti*.

129. *Salter on Cardiganshire Birds.*

[List of the Birds of Aberystwyth and Neighbourhood. By J. H. Salter. 8vo. Pp. 19. Aberystwyth, 1900.]

Local lists of Welsh birds by competent field-naturalists are few and far between, so that Mr. Salter's contribution is very welcome, for the district of Cardiganshire in question has been little noticed by the ornithologist. The Notes on the 206 species recorded are brief, but they are to the purpose and all that can be desired.

130. *Sharpe on the Birds of Christmas Island.*

[A Monograph of Christmas Island (Indian Ocean). Physical Features and Geology by Charles W. Andrews. With Descriptions of the Fauna and Flora by numerous Contributors. (Birds by R. Bowdler Sharpe, LL.D., &c.). 8vo. London, 1900.]

Mr. Andrews's researches have doubled the number of the known birds of Christmas Island, as Mr. Lister's list (P. Z. S. 1888, p. 512) only gave the names of 14 species, and 29 are now recorded. But the additions are all of species of occasional or erratic occurrence and mostly of wide distribution, and the resident land-birds of this curious islet remain 7 in number, all peculiar. It is a pity that the distribution of the occasional visitors is not more fully stated in the monograph, in order to give us some better idea of the origin of the bird-life of Christmas Island.

131. *Stone on Birds from Alaska.*

[Report on the Birds and Mammals obtained by the McIlhenny Expedition to Pt. Barrow, Alaska. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad. 1900, p. 4.]

Mr. Stone writes on the "splendid collection of birds and mammals" obtained by Mr. E. A. McIlhenny during his sojourn at Point Barrow, Alaska, in 1897-98. The series of birds comprises 1408 specimens, representing 69 species, of which 60 are from Point Barrow. Of these 13 are additional to the previous list of Murdoch*, and one (*Eudromias morinellus*) is new to the North-American avifauna. Various

* See Ibis, 1886, p. 195.

critical remarks on the collection are given, but the field-notes are reserved for a separate report. The Passeres of this far-northern spot are 10 in number, amongst which is a Tyrant (*Contopus richardsoni*) not previously observed so far north.

132. *Stone on the Summer-moult of Ducks.*

[The Summer Molting [*sic*] Plumage of certain Ducks. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Nat. Sci. Philad. 1899, p. 467.]

After studying the series of Eider-Ducks obtained by Mr. McIlhenny at Point Barrow, Alaska (see above, p. 689), Mr. Stone has come to the conclusion that the "summer-plumage" assumed by these and other ducks is, in no sense, a "nuptial plumage," as "it does not appear until the mating season is over," and is "distinctly a post-nuptial dress," mainly restricted to the head, neck, breast, and scapulars: Mr. Stone is of opinion that its use is to render the bird inconspicuous during the time when it is moulting its flight-feathers and is unable to fly. He proposes to call it the "summer-moulting plumage."

133. *Van Denburgh on Californian Birds.*

[Notes on some Birds of Santa Clara County, California. By John van Denburgh. Proc. Amer. Phil. Soc. xxxviii. p. 157.]

This is a local list, accompanied by field-notes, of the birds of Santa Clara County, California, based on casual observations extending over fourteen years. The Humming-birds here are *Calypte anna* and *Selasphorus rufus*, both of them resident and breeding.

134. *Van Kempen on his Collection of Varieties and Hybrids.*

[Sur une Série de Mammifères et d'Oiseaux présentant des variétés de Coloration, des Cas d'Hybridité et des Anomalies. Par Ch. van Kempen. Bull. Soc. Zool. France, 1899, p. 213.]

Since 1897, when a former list was published, M. Van Kempen has added considerably to his collection of colour-varieties and hybrids in the classes of Mammals and Birds.

He now gives a list of these additions, enumerating some 30 of the former and 7 of the latter.

135. *Wood on Hume's Bush-Quail.*

[Note on Hume's Bush-Quail (*Microperdix manipurensis*). By Captain H. S. Wood. J. A. S. B. lxxviii. pt. 2, p. 110.]

Capt. Wood states that Hume's Bush-Quail (*Microperdix manipurensis*) is by no means such a rare bird at Manipur as Mr. Hume supposed. During his seven years' residence there Capt. Wood shot more than 80 specimens. Details as to the nesting and habits of the species are given.

XLV.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters, addressed "to the Editors of 'The Ibis'":—

SIRS,—As I understand that some doubts are still expressed as to the truth of the extraordinary instinct attributed to the Honey-guide of attracting natives and travellers to bees'-nests (see above, p. 425), I beg leave to offer you the following account of my own experience in this matter:—

In October and November 1898, I was on a hunting-expedition in the province of Mozambique, in Portuguese East Africa. Starting from a station on the Beira Railway, I explored the country to the north of the Pungwee River for about sixty miles, accompanied by some twenty native carriers.

One day my boys brought me some honey to eat, and when I asked them how they had obtained it, they replied that the Honey-bird had guided them to the nest. Having heard the story of the Honey-guide before, I was much interested, and desired the boys, when they found the Honey-bird calling to them again, to be sure and let me know, as I wished to see the bird and its method of attracting attention. A few days later, on returning to camp, I found some of my boys absent, and was told that they were engaged in taking a bees'-nest. On proceeding to the spot,